

A917

NAME **JOSEF, Hasan**

DATE **7 June 1948**

NATIONALITY **Albanian**

BIRTHDATE **c. 1902.**  
BIRTHPLACE

PRESENT POSITION **Councillor, Directing Committee of the Balli Kombetar, Albania, '42.**

RACE  
SEX **Male.**  
MARITAL STATUS  
NAME OF SPOUSE

LOCATION **Albania.**

GEN. OCCUPATION **Lawyer.**

CHILDREN

EDUCATION **Studied law in Italy.**

RELIGION **Muslim.**

POLITICAL AFFILIATION

LANGUAGES

ATTITUDE TOWARDS: **U.S.**

NOTES

**U.S.S.R.**

#### **CAREER**

1941 - 1942 Minister of Justice, Dec. '41 - May '42.  
1941 - 1942 President of Criminal Division of the High Court, May '42 - Aug. '43.  
1944 One of Vice Presidents of Albanian Institute of Arts and Sciences.  
Member, Directing Council, Balli Kombetar.  
1944 Reported to have escaped to Brindisi, Italy, with other prominent Balli Kombetar leaders. J/  
1944 Councillor, Directing Committee, Balli Kombetar.

#### **REMARKS**

Hasan JOSEF has been considered the most capable jurist in Albania as well as a man of high principles and liberal ideas, for which he was more than once imprisoned by King Zog's government. However, during the war he served as Minister of Justice (Dec. 1941 - May 1942) in Mustafa Kruja's cabinet, which is thought of in Albania as the crucible of all Italian-inspired activities. In May 1943 Costi was appointed President of the Criminal Division of the High Court, but he was dismissed in August 1943 for anti-Soviet activities. He was termed "rightist of the right."

The present review accuses him of having propagated a line of thought the length of which would have been carried into the Communist era, and of having signed the death sentence of the Partisans who were killed by Communist terrorists in Albania. J/ A note received from the Soviet Union...

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EXEMPTIONS Section 3(b)  
(2)(A) Privacy ☐  
(2)(B) Methods/Sources ☒  
(2)(G) Foreign Relations ☐

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

Declassified and Approved  
by the Central Intelligence Agency  
Date: **2003 2005**

HASAN DESTI (cont.)

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Albanian Minister to Belgrade in 1947, lists war criminals and collaborators then residing in Italy and requests they be turned over to Albanian authorities. The note states "Hasan Desti was a member of the Central Committee of the treacherous and collaborationist organization, Balli Kombetar. As Minister of Justice he was responsible for the large scale massacres, imprisonments and confinements of the people; these were committed in the name of the patriotic law, proposed by himself, which inflicted the death penalty upon those who carried arms without permission." The note further states that Desti collaborated with the Italians and the Germans,<sup>4/</sup> although Desti represented the Balli Kombetar in August 1943 at a meeting with LEC in an effort to work out plans for coordinated resistance to the Germans.<sup>5/</sup>

Meanwhile, Desti was also a member of the Central Committee of the Balli Kombetar.<sup>6/</sup> The Balli Kombetar is the Albanian Nationalist Organization, of which Desti and Asim Jakova were original members.<sup>7/</sup> Until 1943, Desti was a leading personality of the BK, but at that time he tended to become a mere figurehead, while the actual running of the organization was usurped by the so-called Paris group.<sup>8/</sup> He was one of the most learned of the BK leaders, but he expressed views which appeared to be at variance with those of the other leaders. He stated that the majority of BK leaders were leftists to the core, for the majority of the Ballists are penniless and landless, with leanings toward stronger agrarian and social reforms than those advocated by the FPC. Desti condemned what he termed the reactionary and intransigent attitude of Ali Kelmendi and a few other Ballists.<sup>9/</sup> He has held several offices in the Balli Kombetar, having been a member of the Directing Council in 1944,<sup>10/</sup> and in 1946 having been elected one of the councillors of the Directing Committee.<sup>10/</sup>

In 1947, through Midhat Bey Frasheri, a prominent Albanian in exile in Italy, Desti tried to secure admission to the United States as a means of counteracting pro-Moxha tendencies among the Albanian colony in this country.<sup>11/</sup>

Between the 5th and 18th of April 1948, it was reported that secret meetings were held in Cairo, at which ex-King Zog, Hasan Desti and other Albanian emigre leaders took part. Plans were made for the future activities of this group and certain aims were agreed upon concerning Albanian refugees in Syria, and the incorporation of Kosovo region into a Greater Albania.<sup>12/</sup> In 1943, Desti had been one of a committee formed to study all books and documents which prove that Kosovo is Albanian.<sup>13/</sup>

Desti, described as a practical man, came from a poor family and is generally respected among the democratic elements in Albania. He is also said to be a fairly good leader.<sup>14/</sup>

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